

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 COTONO 01268 031345Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-05 SCA-01 COME-00 PPTE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 DHA-02
CU-04 /080 W

-----062372 040145Z /70

R 031300Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMCONSUL IBADAN

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9931

UNCLAS COTONOU 1268

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, DM

SUBJ: TRAVEL IN BENIN

REF: COTONOU 1201

1. IN RECENT DAYS TOUR GROUP OF ELEVEN PERSONS, INCLUDING FOUR AMCITS, ARRIVED IN BENIN. THREE MEMBERS, INCLUDING TWO AMERICANS, DETAINED AUGUST 1, AND CONSUL BY PROMISING TO ESCORT THEM TO NIGERIAN BORDER PERSONALLY, SECURED THEIR RELEASE. ON MORNING AUGUST 2, TWO STRAGGLERS FROM GROUP DETAINED AT TOGO BORDER, AND BY NOON REMAINING SIX ALL ARRESTED "FOR SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY", I.E, DRIVING PAST PRESIDENCY THREE TIMES IN COURSE OF MORNING.

2. MEMBERS OF TOUR GROUP TALKED TO TWO OFFICERS AT ONE AMEMBASSY ENROUTE ABOUT PLANS TO VISIT BENIN AND WERE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 COTONO 01268 031345Z

NOT CAUTIONED ABOUT CONDITIONS IN BENIN AND OUR WARNING NOT TO COME TO THE COUNTRY UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. AT ANOTHER AMEMBASSY, AFTER REF ALSO PUT OUT, THEY SAW TRAVEL WARNING NOTICE, INQUIRED ABOUT TRAVEL TO BENIN, AND WERE ADVISED BY SENIOR LOCAL EMPLOYEE THAT SITUATION IN BENIN NOW QUIET.

3. WE WOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL IF ALL AMEMBASSY PERSONNEL, INCLUDING SENIOR LOCAL EMPLOYEES HAVING CONTACT WITH TOURISTS, WOULD WARN INTENDING VISITORS THAT BENINESE AUTHORITIES ARE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO PRESENCE OF FOREIGNERS AND WILL ARREST ANYONE THOUGHT TO BE A POTENTIAL SCOUT FOR MERCENARIES OR OTHER GROUPS THREATENING THE SECURITY OF THE STATE. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BELIEVE RECONNOITERING FOR JAN 16, 1977 MERCENARY ATTACK WAS DONE BY "TOURISTS" AND THUS ARE SUSPICIOUS OF ANY FOREIGNERS TRANSITING THE COUNTRY. IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT AS MATTER OF PRINCIPLE IS OPPOSED TO YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A "LIBERATED LIFESTYLE", AND WILL OFTEN TURN AWAY BLUE-JEANED BACK-PACKERS, ESPECIALLY YOUNG MEN WITH LONG HAIR AND BEARDS. IN THE MOST RECENT INCIDENT, NOT ONLY DO SOME OF THE VISITORS APPEAR TO FALL INTO THIS CATEGORY, BUT THEY WERE ALSO TRAVELLING IN A CONVOY OF HEAVILY LOADED LANDROVERS. UNWITTINGLY, THEY WERE INVITING ARREST.

4. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY HELP YOU CAN GIVE US IN MINIMIZING ARREST CASES.
THOMPSON

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOURISM, TRAVEL CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977COTON001268
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770278-0885
Format: TEL
From: COTONOU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197708103/aaaadjgr.tel
Line Count: 83
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c793144f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 COTONOU 1201
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1408908
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRAVEL IN BENIN
TAGS: CASC, DM, US
To: ABIDJAN ACCRA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c793144f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009